

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05 L-03
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INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
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AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: OCON ENRG TH
SUBJECT: ENERGY INITIATIVES FOR VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO THE
ASEAN AREA

REF: JAKARTA 4498

1. WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO SUPPORT, IN PRINCIPLE, USG
CONTRIBUTION TOWARD FORMATION OF ASEAN-SPONSORED INTERNATIONAL
CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF NON-CONVENTIONAL AND
ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY (REFTEL). WE SUGGEST, HOWEVER,
THAT IT SHOULD FUNCTION AS CLEARING HOUSE FOR INFORMATION.
WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD PROVE POLITICALLY USEFUL OR TECHNICALLY
PRODUCTIVE TO GROUP ASEAN SCIENTISTS, WITH THEIR DIFFERENT
LANGUAGES AND INTERESTS, TOGETHER IN SINGLE, NEWLY CONSTRUCTED
R AND D FACILITY WHICH WOULD PROBABLY TOUCH OFF INTRAMURAL
STRUGGLE IN ASEAN CAPITALS OVER LOCATION. TO DEGREE THAT SUCH
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GROUPING MIGHT BE FELT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY, ASIAN INSTITUTE
OF TECHNOLOGY IN BANGKOK WOULD SEEM IDEAL VENUE.

2. AS PRACTICAL MATTER, WE ANTICIPATE THAT ASEAN R AND D ROLE
IN NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY FIELD WILL BE PRIMARILY APPLICATION
OF DISCOVERIES AND ADVANCES MADE IN TECHNOLOGICALLY AND SCIENTI-
FICALLY ADVANCED COUNTRIES. WE BELIEVE THAT THAILAND'S SCIENTIFIC

FACILITIES AND INSTITUTIONS ARE ADEQUATE FOR SUCH ROLE.
BECAUSE OF OTHER PERCEIVED PRIORITIES, WHAT IS LACKING TO DATE
IS: (1) SERIOUS RTG BUDGETARY COMMITMENT TO NON-CONVENTIONAL
ENERGY R AND D, AND; (2) WILL TO CARRY OUT SUCH PROGRAMS.
HOWEVER, IF USG CAN PROVIDE READY ACCESS TO PRACTICAL R AND D
INFORMATION, AS WELL AS SOME SUPPORT AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
TO EXPLOIT THAT INFORMATION, THAI MIGHT SEE IT IN THEIR INTEREST
TO PROCEED WITH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

3. WITH REGARD TO FUNDING, WE SUGGEST, THAT AS MEASURE OF RTG'S
AND OTHER ASEAN MEMBERS' COMMITMENT TO ANY INTERNATIONAL OR
FOREIGN-FUNDED PROGRAM, THEY BE ASKED TO INVEST IN IT THEMSELVES.
THEREFORE, THE USG MIGHT WISH TO PLACE UPPER LIMIT OF, SAY, 20
PERCENT (IN ADDITION TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE) ON FUNDING
OF REGIONAL ENERGY PROGRAMS WHICH MIGHT EMERGE FROM VICE
PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVES. IF ASEAN MEMBERS ARE SERIOUS ABOUT
DEVELOPING JOINT R AND D PROGRAM, THEY SHOULD BE PREPARED TO
SHARE COSTS.
WHITEHOUSE

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